

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet/Cabinet Committee

06 September 2022



Subject: Ukraine Response Programme – Additional Resource Requirements

Report of: Richard Brooks,
Director for Strategy, Equality & Partnerships

Relevant Cabinet Member: Cllr John Cotton - Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities

Relevant O &S Chair(s): Cllr Akhlaq Ahmed – Coordinating Committee; Resourcing Committee

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Are specific wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Is this a key decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference:		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:		

1 Executive Summary

1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to agree to additional resources being provided to bolster the capacity within Council services, and also commission additional services, in order to support Birmingham City Council's response to Ukraine.

- 1.2 As set out in the report, the scale and the pace of Ukrainian nationals arriving in Birmingham has remained large and this is placing a significant strain on existing resources to respond to the pressure.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - 2.1.1 allocates funding of £1.422m from the Financial Resilience Reserve to the Ukraine Response programme, covering a period of two years (from Apr 22 to March 24).
 - 2.1.2 allocates funding of up to £10.5 million from the central Government's payments of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme to the Ukraine Response programme, covering a period of two years (from Apr 22 to March 24).
 - 2.1.3 agrees that the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities lobby Central Government for additional funding to meet the extra costs and pressures covered by the £1.422m, particularly given the other calls that will be placed upon the Council's resources in the coming months as a result of the cost of living crisis.
 - 2.1.4 authorises the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to negotiate, execute and complete all necessary documentation to give effect to the above recommendations.

And to note that:

- 2.1.5 The funding will provide additional capacity to key services to drive and manage the work, as well as to resource a core programme team that will support the SRO. It will also cover the extension of PwC engagement so that development of the Refugee Case Management and Reporting can be completed, and it be transitioned and fully adopted within the Council.
- 2.1.6 The funding is for an additional one-off pot of money and considers the funding from Central Government. Therefore, the ask is in addition to that funding.
- 2.1.7 If arrivals are lower than projected, then spending will be scaled back accordingly.

3 Background

- 3.1 Since March 2022, the pressure and pace of the Ukraine Response has continued with the rate and volume of Ukraine visa applications being applied for and issued still increasing. As of the 8th August, Birmingham City Council had 457 sponsors matched to or accommodating 766 Ukrainian guests (of whom 530 have arrived) and an unknown number of families that have arrived via the family visa scheme.

We anticipate the total number of Homes for Ukraine arrivals rising to 1,000 guests.

3.2 Services across the Council have responded at pace to support the rapid increase of Ukrainian families settling into the City, with the additional challenge of implementing a new Government resettlement approach via the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. The Council is managing and progressing a range of work strands and activities, with increasing numbers of resources being drawn into the work from across and outside the Council.

3.2.1 This currently includes:

- **Managing the requirements of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme** and ensuring the Council are able to facilitate the necessary checks, payments processes and Central Government reporting obligations that ensue
- **Responding to the new and emerging Housing issues** that are arising out of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and the family visa scheme.
- **Developing and supporting on the broader resettlement** – outside of housing, there are growing demands on the Council to work with partners/agencies to respond to the needs around education, health, transport, language and skills
- **Engaging with community partners and organisations** who are proactively supporting the placement and settlement of families and their sponsors.
- **Responding to the significantly high volume of correspondence**, members' enquiries and FOIs that are being generated particularly from the introduction and approach to the Homes for Ukraine Scheme

3.3 The key implicated services that have been and will continue to be drawn into this work are: Housing, Children and Families, Adult Social Care, Digital, City Management, City Operations, Public Health and Birmingham Children's Trust.

3.4 Whilst current approaches have been able to maintain a basic response and deal with the key asks from Central Govt, resources across key services are being stretched to capacity and the current level of demand is unsustainable. Even with Refugee Action being commissioned to provide the main support on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, the resources identified in Annex A reflects the work that will still be required to support Homes for Ukraine and also the work to look at the broader resettlement of Ukrainian families

4 Options considered and Recommended Proposal

4.1 The Council's Ukraine Strategic Response Group considered the following options to maintain pace and deliver the citizen centred resettlement support for Sponsors and Ukrainian guests:

- (a) **Do nothing:** Existing resources within the Council have been supporting the administrative requirements of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, as well as

focusing on the resettlement support that is needed for Ukrainian nationals to begin to rebuild their lives within the City. With the growing pressures of the cost of living crisis, there are increasing pressures on the same resources to maintain the velocity of checks and also to offer a proactive response to support the early resettlement process. This may become particularly acute as we begin to focus on the 'move on' strategy for Ukrainian guests as the first point of review for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Doing nothing is not a viable option as the Government has asked Local Authorities to provide critical support in administering the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and supporting Ukrainians to settle. Without sufficient resources, the Council could also be faced with considerable safeguarding risks requiring statutory intervention risking the lives of vulnerable people if further support is not provided to facilitate the arrangements.

(b) Secure additional resources/funding: The Ukraine Strategic Response Group and the resourcing work group have considered the resource implications across services, and Annex A sets out the attached view in where additional capacity is needed within existing teams and/or through commissioning arrangements to meet the current demands of the programme.

Cabinet should note the following regarding the costs set out in Annex A:

- Given the uncertainty, scale and pace of the Ukrainian response, the Response Group have profiled a level of capacity up to the end of 2023 based on the current trajectory and profile of Ukraine arrivals.
- The funding is for an additional one-off pot of money and considers the funding from Central Government. The Homes for Ukraine process attracts funding from Central Government and this is set out at Annex B. The funding ask takes into account that money.
- It sets out the spend that we have committed to and profiled against, such as the procurement of Refugee Action.
- As well as supporting existing services, the annex also scopes out the cost of having a small programme team that can support the work of the Strategic Response Group by driving key strands of work and tracking delivery.
- It also captures the costs of continuing the engagement of PwC for a short period of time to finalise and adopt a cross Council refugee case management and reporting tool that will be used for this programme and responses to future refugee settlement programmes. The initial engagement by PwC was undertaken pro-bono and the remaining work will be to ensure the Council maximises the benefits of that engagement. A separate process has been initiated with legal and procurement to procure this work in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures.

- It is envisaged that beyond March 2024, there will be sufficient awareness and knowledge for services to factor any continued commitments/capacity as part of their ongoing financial planning.
- Finally, there is a residual contingency pot profiled in to address any response to additional pressures related to the administration, delivery or commissioning of Homes for Ukraine over the next two years, given that there is currently no confirmed commitment of funding beyond March 2023 from Central Government. The value of the contingency pot is based on receiving Central Government funding for an estimated total of 1,000 guests.
- Annex B sets out the funding allocated by Central Government over the next 2 years based on an estimated number of Ukrainians arriving via the Homes for the Ukraine Scheme. As will be noted the funding provided does not match the calculated spend on the profile. The difference is the £1.42 m that is being requested.

4.2 Recommended option: To allocate additional funding to secure and/or commission additional resources to meet the ongoing and future demands of the Ukraine Response.

5 Consultation

5.1 This report has been developed through ongoing involvement with the cross-council senior official's Ukraine Strategic Response Group chaired by Richard Brookes Director of Strategy, Equality and Partnerships. The Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet Members have received briefings about the Ukraine crisis and priorities of the Birmingham's Ukraine Strategic Response Group.

6 Risk Management

6.1 Safeguarding - Whilst there is a service provider in place conducting the pre-arrival sponsor checks, Birmingham Children's Trust have maintained responsibility for initiating the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS). This has proved valuable in providing an initial indication of risk whilst awaiting the results of the Disclosure and Barring checks. The volume of checks are currently being managed within existing resources and these are being prioritised against risk, i.e. those with children/vulnerable adult and prior to arrival. Additional administrative resources will ensure that the Trust is able to maintain throughput.

7 Compliance Issues:

7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

7.1.1 The decision is consistent with the council's City of Sanctuary Policy Statement 2018-22, which was approved by Cabinet in late 2018 and by Full Council in January 2019.

7.2 Legal Implications

7.2.1 There are no legal implications.

7.3 Financial Implications

7.3.1 The financial implications are set out in the recommended approach. The annexes set out the totality of resources (£11.92m) that are required to manage different strands of the programme and the total estimated funding that will be received from Central Government (£10.5m) to support the response. The difference between the resources required to support the programme and the estimated funding that will be received from central Government, t is what forms the value of the ask for Cabinet.

7.4 Procurement Implications

There are no procurement implications, as the services procured in Annex A have been through a separate procurement and Cabinet approval process. On the 26th April 2022, Cabinet approved the Council to undertake single contract negotiations with Refugee Action to award a contract to administer the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

7.5 Human Resources Implications

7.5.1 The Ukraine Strategic Response Group will work with services to oversee and monitor the increase in capacity.

7.5.2 Subject to Cabinet approval, relevant services will recruit/backfill roles as outlined in Annex A in accordance with the Council and Birmingham Children's Trust HR policies. Working with HR and finance to finalise any details of roles (full job descriptions, job evaluations etc) and to commence the recruitment process.

7.6 Public Sector Equality Duty

7.6.1 The purpose of the requirements is to ensure the local authority can discharge its responsibilities under the Equality Act through the provision of resettlement support and co-ordination to arriving Ukrainian guests and their sponsors.

8 Appendices

8.1 Annex A - Ukraine Response - Resource requirements

Annex B -Homes for Ukraine funding

Annex C - Refugee Action (Scope of activity)

Annex A – Ukraine Response - Resource requirements

AREA	REQUIREMENTS WHERE RESOURCES ARE NEEDED	RATIONALE	DURATION	GRADE AND NUMBER	ANNUAL COST <i>Based on top of the pay scale rates</i>	TOTAL COST
RESOURCES COSTS						
Core Programme Team	To oversee the programme of work, supporting the Strategic Response Group. Driving and tracking delivery as well as undertaking core asks	Current rate and pace of change has required wide ranging governance to be set up. Admin support is required across key services to support the reporting requirements and engagement	18 months (See outline below) *	1 FTE x GR7 1 FTE x GR5 1 FTE x GR3	£114k £66k £40k	£330k
Adult Social Care Refugee & Migration Team	Administer the Homes for Ukraine process and contract manage Refugee Action	Manage the Central Govt Portal to access Sponsor data and communicate outcomes Unlocks Central Govt funding	2 years	1 x GR5 FTE 2 x GR4 FTE	£66k £104k	£340k
Birmingham Children's Trust	Maintain the ability to conduct CASS checks on sponsors thereby identifying any risks	Provides a quick an initial assessment of any safeguarding risks as part of the Homes for Ukraine process	18 months	2 FTE x GR5 2 FTE x GR3	£132k £80k	£212k

Education & Skills	Admissions teams	To support the School admissions and early years process by liaising with schools and brokering places	18 months	2 FTE x GR4	£104k	£156k
Housing	Funding to meet the additional pressure upon service of Ukraine arrivals including operational demands and oversight and reporting.	Highlight the different categories and approach to these: - Medical evacs to secure bespoke solution over-and-above the normal process; H4U pressure through Housing Needs Assessments, TA and move-on inc re-hosting; Family Visa Scheme – HNA's, TA, move-on;	18 months	1 FTE x GR5 (oversight and coordination)	£66k	£99k

Digital	Maintain a Contact Centre function to initiate engagement with sponsors and continue with an inbound call function	Requirement to gather data from DLUHC and make initial contact with sponsor. Outside of Refugee Action will need to maintain function for inbound queries and rematching process	9 months	2FTE x GR4	£104k	£78k
				3FTE x GR3	£120k	£90k
	Continued development support for the case management and reporting tool that has been developed by the Contact Centre and PwC	Enables data to be shared efficiently and supports the administration of the process to enable checks, payments and support to sponsors and guests.	3 months	PwC extension for 12 weeks max.	1 sprint @ £55k (1 sprint = 2 wks)	£330k
		Additional devt resource to support beyond PwC engagement	18 months	1FTE x GR5	£66k	£99k
TOTAL RESOURCE COSTS						£1.734m
COMMISSIONED/ CONTRACTED ACTIVITY COSTS						
Commissioned Resettlement provider (Refugee Action)	All immediate checks/resettlement and re-matching support to all arrivals	Provides capacity to manage the administration of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme as well as provide resettlement support for each Ukrainian family (Annex C sets out a more detailed outline of their work)	Commences: 6 th June 2022 2 years (12 months after the last arrival)	Refugee Action contract	£7,251 per guest (est @ 1,000 guests)	£7.251m

Grants programme	Provision of funding grants to Community groups within Birmingham City that are supporting on Ukraine Settlement that can support and provide services to disseminate information & advice to Ukrainian families and residents; help with supporting and building sponsorship networks and also support on rematching.	Supports the early needs of Ukrainians when they arrive and early integration. It also provides resilience and support to sponsors. £5 - 20k to support activities/services provided by community-based orgs filling gaps that commissioned services may leave	9 months (for allocation and 12 months to spend)	Up to 25 organisations plus additional funding for food parch	Up to £20k per organisation	£500k
Temporary Accommodation	Provision of emergency temporary accommodation and move on incentives	Provides additional capacity to respond to any pressures felt by sponsorship breakdowns	2 years	£240 x 50 households over 14 weeks	Temporary Accommodation x 50 households at 14 weeks x £240/wk = £168k; incentives to enable move-on £32k; total	£200k
Move on – Accommodation	To be commissioned subject to assessment of need. Housing provision for Guest move-on support	To support guests move on to longer term accommodation.	2 years	£1,578 x 350 households	Based on previous commissioned activity costs - £1578 Based on number of estimated households	£552k

ESOL Provision	To be Commissioned Support delivery of ESOL to adults through funding BAES provision or community-based activity	Bolster capacity for approximately 350 adults which will support integration and resettlement	2 years	£50,000 per 100 adults	Based on £50k pa paid to BEEAS who deliver extra ESOL to Syrians and Afghans - £50k/100 persons (average no of beneficiaries) x 350 households = £175k	£175k
Mental Health Support	To be commissioned subject to assessment of need. Access to mental health and wellbeing services for adults and children -	Support Mental Health treatment for those recovering from the trauma of war	2 years	£1,000 per refugee	Based on £50k for 50 refugee beneficiaries on current treatment therapies delivered by Beacon Counselling and Bham Community Arts Therapy. For 300 refugees x £1,000	£300k
Employment support	To be commissioned subject to assessment of need Support access to job market	350 adults	2 years	£600 per adult	Based on £150k Y2-5 contract/250 Syrians = 600x350 Ukrainian adults = 210	£210k

Contingency	To respond to any additional pressures related to the administration, delivery or commissioning of Homes for Ukraine.	1000 adults	£2 years	£500K		£1m
TOTAL COMMISSIONED/ CONTRACTED ACTIVITY COSTS						£10.188m
TOTAL OVERALL COSTS						£11.922m
(minus) CENTRAL GOVT FUNDING						£10.5m
ADDITIONAL FUNDING ASK						£1.422

Annex B: Homes for Ukraine funding

Estimated Tariff for Homes for Ukraine based on 1000 guests.

Area	Resource	Unit Cost	Estimated value	Duration	Explanation of Tariff
Homes for Ukraine	DLUHC Resettlement Tariff	£10,500pp	£10,500,000	12 months	Central Government funding

Assumptions / Clarifications

- The number of guests is estimated at 1,000 based on the current number of guests 766 and an approx. monthly increase of approx. 30 guests over the next 9 months as we see the number of sponsors and matches plateau.
- In line with existing resettlement schemes the allocation of activity to support guests from Ukraine and their sponsors will need to cover at least 12 months after the last guest arrives. For planning purposes this is calculated from when the last guest could feasibly arrive i.e. March 2023 with support therefore required to be in place until March 2024.
- Central Government funding for Homes for Ukraine has only been confirmed for 2022/23. Therefore, calculations are made on this basis without anticipation of further funding.
- All commissioned activity is subject to assessment of need and consultation with stakeholders.
- All values and budget are estimated and subject to numbers of guests arriving, need and contract negotiations.

* Core Programme Team

1 x Programme manager

Role: To establish and oversee the programme of work, supporting the Strategic Response Group to drive and track delivery

Responsibilities: Planning and establishing the programme of work and tracking delivery; setting up the key processes & structures that enable and record decision making; act as the central point of coordination and managing/utilising resources across the core work strands; identifying and managing risks alongside the mitigating actions; supporting the admin of the Ukraine Strategic Response Group and working groups by ensuring core PPM products (decision logs, actions, minutes) are established and maintained; overseeing the financial and data reporting requirements for the programme both internally and to Central Govt

1 x Project Support

Role: To support in establishing and maintaining the key PPM products and to support with project managing specific strands of work that require join up across services and to support on the reporting requirements for the programme across all work strands.

Responsibilities: Providing secretariat to the USRG through the maintenance of a project plan, decision, action and risk logs; maintaining the risk log and tracking actions. Supporting the Programme Manager in establishing progress reporting/dashboards to Ukraine Strategic Response Group and providing principal support for core workstrands particularly on the communications and engagement and finance/data requirements of the programme.

1 x Admin Officer

Role: To support on admin arrangements across the programme particularly on establishing and managing the correspondence process.

Responsibilities: Setting up and minuting meetings for the USRG, managing the correspondence email box, logging/tracking responses, supporting on basic comms.

Annex C: Refugee Action (Scope of activity)

Activity	Detail
Pre arrival accommodation / DBS checks	Safeguarding checks
Provision of information to sponsor on their role/expectations, access to training	Information advice and guidance
Sponsor welcome packs and information on life in UK	Information advice and guidance
Post arrival accommodation / wellbeing checks	Safeguarding checks
Initial payment – refugees	Financial aid
Ongoing Wellbeing checks	Case management
Sponsor and guest Assessment of need / support	Case management
Welfare / benefits support	Case management support to individuals linking in with DWP
Education / schools admission	Fund post in BCC schools' admissions team for Ukraine families
Health referrals	develop and manage referral pathways
Housing / homelessness referrals	Develop and manage referral pathways
Immigration advice and support	Direct referral to Sub contracted provider
Re-matching of guests	Oversee all re-matching requests, checks etc
Provision of emergency support / housing for sponsor failure	Via PRS or Airbnb
ESOL referrals support	Develop referral pathway
Sponsor guest relationship support	Case management
Engage with BCC systems and processes	Manage information / data
Case management of all households	